

# Bentley West Primary School Additionally Resourced for Hearing Impaired

Monmouth Road, Bentley, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 0EQ

## Inspection dates

1–2 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Good</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Too few pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from Years 1 to 6.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 is below the national average.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good.
- Teachers do not challenge pupils well enough, especially the most able. Consequently only a small number of pupils reach the higher standards.
- Teachers' expectations are too low. They sometimes accept work which is not well presented and not a pupil's best effort.
- Sometimes teachers provide too much support in lessons for pupils. This restricts pupils' ability to use their own ideas and think for themselves.
- Pupils' grammar, spelling and punctuation skills are not secure. Their mathematical reasoning skills and mental arithmetic skills are also underdeveloped.
- Pupils have very limited knowledge of British values and different world religions.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is above the national average and has risen over the last three years.

### The school has the following strengths

- The relatively new principal provides clear leadership. She is ably supported by an effective leadership team. Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength, and reading across the school is improving.
- Children get off to a strong start in the early years. They settle quickly and make good progress.
- Pupils behave well. The new 'good to be green' initiative is understood by pupils and is having a positive impact on their behaviour.
- Leaders promote pupils' personal development and welfare well. Deaf pupils are fully integrated into school life.
- The curriculum provides a range of exciting and worthwhile experiences. These add to pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Pupils feel safe and are well cared for.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and thereby raise the proportion of pupils working at and above the standards expected at the end of key stages 1 and 2, by ensuring that teachers:
  - provide greater levels of challenge, especially for the most able pupils
  - increase opportunities for pupils to use their own ideas and work independently
  - equip pupils with effective grammar, punctuation and spelling skills to improve the accuracy of their writing
  - improve pupils’ mental mathematics and reasoning skills
  - have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and only accept work that is well presented.
- Further develop strategies already in place to reduce persistent absence.
- Develop pupils’ knowledge of other faiths and British values to provide them with a secure grounding for life in modern Britain.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since her appointment in March 2018, the principal has set a clear and ambitious direction for the school. She accurately assessed that improvements were needed to teaching and outcomes. Actions taken together with the head of school and an increasingly effective leadership team are beginning to bring about improvements, especially in reading. However, some initiatives introduced need further time to become established and show impact.
- Good use is made of the effective teaching resource available within the federation. Staff have benefited from working with leaders and teachers from King Charles Primary School. For example, lead teachers work with practitioners who need additional support, and collaboration between the two heads of school is strong. Effective systems and good practice are readily shared.
- Phase and subject leaders are bringing about improvements in their areas. Detailed action plans are focused on the right priorities. Training provided for staff, together with new and improved resources, are helping to improve the consistency and quality of teaching. Staff appreciate the training they receive, and responses to the staff questionnaire show that staff morale is high.
- All leaders are involved in checking the quality of teaching and provide feedback and appropriate support to strengthen provision. The principal and governors are not afraid to tackle weak teaching where improvements are too slow.
- Leaders ensure that all pupils participate fully in school life and that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Residential visits are partially funded for disadvantaged pupils, and pupils from the deaf resource provision are fully integrated into mainstream classes.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides interesting activities and exciting opportunities to develop pupils' experiences. Pupils use their literacy and mathematical skills well in topic work, for example to write about the Fire of London or create temperature charts for Brazil. Art and physical education (PE) are areas of strength. A wide range of clubs, visits and visitors add to pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Leaders have ensured that the pupil premium funding is used effectively. It is targeted at providing additional academic, emotional and pastoral support for eligible pupils. A family worker carefully monitors pupils' attendance. Regular contact with parents and carers and provision of a breakfast club for these pupils has led to an improvement in attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- The physical education and sport funding for primary schools has been used to help improve the quality of teaching and the range of activities available for pupils. Specialist coaching is provided and the school participates in a large number of sports competitions. Pupils are skilled in football, cross-country and tennis and have a high success rate in tournaments, often winning the trophy.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well in assemblies, topics, lessons and events. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and

wrong and treat each other with respect. Through topic work, they have a good knowledge of different countries, including Australia, France, Italy and Canada. Art, music and French also strengthen pupils' cultural development. However, pupils have a limited understanding of world religions and British values. Consequently, they are not as prepared for life in modern Britain as they should be.

- The local authority has provided little support for the school until recently and acknowledges that it did not identify concerns early enough. Following the short inspection in September 2018, an external review was commissioned and support was provided for the principal in relation to school improvement planning. As a result, action plans are now sharper and focused on the right priorities.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are committed and experienced. They have a good understanding of how well the school is achieving. They are honest and accurate in their evaluation.
- Governors challenge leaders well. They ask probing questions in meetings and receive reports from different leaders to gain a wider view of leadership and its impact in different areas.
- Governors are well informed. They check the information that leaders provide and have specific areas of responsibility as link governors. This gives them an in-depth knowledge of areas such as safeguarding and special educational needs. They use this knowledge effectively to hold leaders to account.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and governors receive relevant training and updates, including on child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation awareness. Monthly safeguarding meetings are held to review vulnerable pupils.
- Leaders and governors are suitably trained in safer recruitment. They make sure that all necessary checks are carried out prior to appointing staff.
- Staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard pupils. They know whom to report concerns to and are confident that action will be taken.
- Leaders keep detailed electronic records. They involve external agencies when necessary and are persistent in following up concerns. They ensure that pupils get the support they need. Pupils at risk are closely monitored.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Parent and staff responses show that pupils are well cared for.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Requires improvement**

- Until recently, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have made insufficient progress because there has been a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching over time. Teaching is now improving but it is not consistently good across the school.

- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. They accept too little work or work which is untidy.
- Work is not sufficiently challenging, especially for the most able, and pupils complete work which they can already do. Pupils themselves told inspectors that they find their work too easy.
- Adults provide too much support for some pupils and provide resources which limit pupils' ability to use their own ideas and work independently. For example, Year 2 pupils were given words such as 'exquisite' to help with their descriptions of a platypus and times-table grids were provided for Year 6 pupils to help with fraction work. Pupils relied on and used these resources, despite many of them being capable of using their own words and knowing their times tables.
- Some teaching is leading to good learning. For example, phonics is taught well in the early years and Year 1. Pupils have a good grasp of early sounds and most can use their phonic skills to read successfully.
- The teaching of reading is improving. Leaders have introduced a new approach to guided reading and purchased new books, which cover a range of different genres and appeal to boys. Reading for pleasure is promoted well and most pupils read regularly both at home and at school. Those who find reading difficult are provided with additional adult support.
- Pupils use a good range of vocabulary and imaginative ideas in their writing. A three-stage approach is used to help pupils develop their writing skills. Leaders have increased the focus on spelling this year through a 'spelling passport' and weekly lessons. However, pupils still have limited strategies to support their use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Consequently, too many inaccuracies remain in their written work, which reduces the overall quality of the finished piece.
- The teaching of mathematics is not securely good. Pupils are taught in ability groups, but even the most able lack confidence in their use of mental arithmetic. Problem-solving activities are increasingly presented in lessons, but pupils are given too few opportunities to provide reasons for their thinking and explain their answers.
- Lessons are planned effectively with clear learning objectives and units that fit towards an end goal. Teachers' subject knowledge is used well, especially in English lessons. Some use of previous learning helps pupils recall their learning and then build on it. Adults systematically check pupils' work and understanding through effective questioning or circling during lessons.
- Support staff, including those who support deaf pupils, make a good contribution to learning and work closely with teaching staff. They provide additional support for small groups of pupils or individuals. This has a positive effect on the progress these pupils make.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is good.

- Pupils have positive attitudes and are happy at school. They enjoy and are interested in their learning, particularly art, PE and topic work. Pupils develop confidence and resilience due to the good relationships which exist with staff and other pupils.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and are adamant that this is not a problem in school. They are confident that if they report issues, they are resolved.
- Pupils have well-developed social skills. They help and collaborate well with each other. Pupils are particularly supportive towards pupils who are deaf. Older pupils undertake a one-year course in British Sign Language. This recognises the sign language skills they have learned in school.
- Pupils feel safe and cared for. They are taught about personal safety in lessons and through visitors, for example through the delivery of the NSPCC 'Pants project'. Pupils have a good knowledge of online safety as they receive training from learning ambassadors. Parents and staff who gave their views agreed that pupils are kept safe in school.
- Pupils are encouraged to be physically healthy. They participate in lots of sports and have a good understanding of the importance of a good diet, exercise and rest.
- Pupils enjoy and readily take on additional responsibilities in school. For example, pupils act as play leaders and information technology ambassadors and manage the school office at lunchtimes.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and helpful, and positive relationships exist with staff and each other. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and follow instructions given by adults. Pupils are keen and concentrate well when tasks are interesting. Pupils show good levels of respect for each other.
- Breaktime and lunchtime behaviour is generally positive, including during wet playtimes. The school is orderly. Pupils move around school sensibly and carefully. Lessons progress without disruption.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well. They systematically record incidents on the school's electronic recording system and follow these up with appropriate sanctions. Records checked show that there have been no exclusions in recent years and that there has only been a very small number of bullying or racist incidents this year.
- Pupils know and follow the school's behaviour policy. The 'good to be green' initiative introduced this year is having a positive effect on behaviour. Pupils are keen to earn the bronze, silver and gold star badges for consistently good behaviour.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. The school monitors pupils' attendance very closely. A range of incentives are in place to reward and encourage good attendance, for example book prizes and trips to the cinema.
- Absence is carefully tracked and appropriate steps are taken when a pupil's attendance falls below particular levels. Newsletters serve as reminders to parents about the importance of regular attendance. Nevertheless, the rate of persistent absence remains

above the national average as a small minority of parents continue to take holidays during term time. Leaders are determined to address this.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make enough progress. Over the last three years, pupils have made less progress in reading, writing and mathematics, by the end of key stage 2, than other pupils nationally. Current pupils are not making enough progress to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Although attainment at the end of key stage 1 is broadly in line with the national average over time and is rising steadily, inspection evidence shows that current Year 1 and Year 2 pupils have not built sufficiently on the standards they achieved at the end of the early years. Fewer pupils are now working at age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics compared to the end of their Reception Year. This means that they have not made good progress.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 has been below the national average in combined reading, writing and mathematics for at least three years. Too few pupils in current Year 6 are on track to reach or exceed the standards expected. As a result, pupils are not as prepared for secondary school as they should be.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics check are above the national average. Pupils use their phonic skills well to break down tricky words. Leaders ensure that pupils have phonically decodable reading books to take home so that they can practise the sounds they have learned.
- Pupils with SEND do not make enough progress. They make less progress than other pupils nationally. Pupils who are deaf and with education, health and care plans make better progress than pupils with SEND support. This is because they have effective one-to-one support in lessons.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve similar standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 to their peers in school, but do less well than other pupils nationally. The progress for current pupils in the school is variable due to inconsistent teaching. In some year groups, disadvantaged pupils outperform their classmates and are making good progress. However, in other year groups, there are wide differences in attainment and very few pupils are working at age-related expectations.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress they should, especially in mathematics. Too few reach greater depth in key stage 1 or the higher standard in key stage 2. This is because they are not given work which challenges them or extends their learning.
- Pupils make good progress in art and produce work of a good standard. The best pieces of work are framed and prominently displayed around the school.

## Early years provision

## Good

- Most children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge below those typically expected for their age, especially in communication and language. As a result of well-planned activities and high levels of nurture and support, children settle quickly and gain the confidence and skills needed to make a good start in the Reception Year.

- Children make good progress in the early years due to effective teaching and strong leadership. By the end of Reception Year, the large majority of children reach a good level of development. This stands them in good stead for Year 1.
- Teachers plan an exciting range of activities which develop all areas of learning, particularly children’s social and communication skills. Activities are skilfully woven around a theme. For example, children in the Nursery enjoyed a visit from the community police officer. They asked questions and then explored the police van. Follow-up activities included opportunities to dress up as a police officer and direct traffic on the playground, take messages on the police switchboard and practise writing 999.
- Writing skills are strongly promoted and often these are linked to a class story. For example, children in Reception classes tasted different fruits, like those in the story ‘The Very Hungry Caterpillar’. They then wrote about how these tasted, using different adjectives.
- Phonic teaching is good. Children get off to a good start in their reading and practise their letters and sounds daily. Children work in ability groups, and adults move middle- and higher-attaining children on appropriately. However, lower-ability children repeat sounds, and expectations for this group of children are not sufficiently high.
- Children behave well and respond quickly to adult instructions. Even when they were excited by their visit to the police van, Nursery children moved sensibly and quietly between the classroom and the playground. Children share resources and collaborate well. They are happy and enjoy their learning experiences.
- Leadership of the early years is provided by a lead teacher from the federation. She is knowledgeable and experienced and provides good support for staff. Regular assessments are made of children’s abilities. These are accurate. A wealth of evidence of children’s work is collected and compiled in a learning journey to support judgements made. The leader has a clear overview of where strengths lie and where other improvements can be made.
- Safeguarding is effective. Children are taught about personal safety from the outset. Staff are fully trained and vigilant when observing activities. Children are well supervised when working outdoors and in the classroom.



## School details

Unique reference number	104174
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10083950

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	501
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Lee
Federation principal	Kate Magner
Telephone number	01922 720792
Website	<a href="http://www.bentley-west.org.uk">www.bentley-west.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:bentleywest.postbox@bentleyfederation.org.uk">bentleywest.postbox@bentleyfederation.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2018

## Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized, primary school.
- The school is part of the Bentley Federation, alongside King Charles Primary School in Walsall. The principal and a single governing body oversee both schools.
- The school receives additional funding as a resource base for hearing impaired pupils.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average. The proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in all classes with four members of the leadership team. Inspectors also looked at pupils' books with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed an assembly, playtime, lunchtime and small groups of pupils working with support or teaching staff.
- Meetings were held with staff from across the federation, including the principal, the heads of school from Bentley West and King Charles Primary, staff with leadership responsibilities, four governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and comments submitted through Parent Text. The school's own survey of parents' comments was considered, together with views gathered from parents as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors also considered the survey responses from 35 staff.
- Pupils' views were collected by talking to pupils informally during break and lesson times.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, talked to them about their learning and reviewed the work in their books.
- Inspectors reviewed a number of documents, including the school's own evaluation on how well it is doing, the school development plan, data on current achievement, a review of the school commissioned by the local authority, minutes of governors' meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mike Appleby	Ofsted Inspector
Kim Ellis	Ofsted Inspector
Janice Wood	Ofsted Inspector

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